

**Effects of starvation on feeding preference of the herbivorous green sea urchin
*Strongylocentrotus droebachiensis***

The green sea urchin *Strongylocentrotus droebachiensis* is a marine herbivore found in rocky intertidal zones where algal species are abundant. They have been found to prefer the brown algae *Laminaria saccharina*. Preference experiments have shown that it is not chemical defenses that deter urchins from feeding on other types of algae. I examined the effect of starvation on the food preference of the green sea urchin. The amount of algae eaten in both trials showed that there was avoidance of the red algae *Palmaria palmata*. In the first trial the urchins ate an equal amount of green (mean=0.077g) and brown algae (mean=0.074g). In the second trial there was no significant difference in algae remaining. When starved for a longer period of time, the urchins had less of a preference for food type.

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